

UPSTAIRS BULLETIN

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An Educational Group

"GO PLACIDLY amid the noise and haste, and remember what peace there may be in silence. As far as possible without surrender be on good terms with all persons."

(Found in Old Saint Paul's Church
Baltimore, Dated 1692.)

At it's inception, in 1958, the UPSTAIRS CLUB was a promising organization with considerable enthusiasm to accomplish something. Little remains of that group today but the 48 steps - the idea - and the BULLETIN. The group has elected officers and in the beginning sponsored some interesting gatherings and events. Probably because of the nature of our profession in no time some were on tour, others had schedules changed or got married, and soon the attendance began to falter with all the work falling on one or two shoulders. At most it lasted not more than two years. We did learn many things from this - mainly, that words are cheap and that promises are even cheaper. Most people can drum up enthusiasm as long as there is no work involved. It was with regret that the Club was disbanded. The left over bank account was used to buy the movie projector that we now show films to the students during the summer course. The Bulletin I have kept alive because I am a very persistent person. (I'm not always certain it is appreciated).

What is of interest in the period the Bulletin covers from March 1958 to the present is the number of careers that have been launched from the school. Just to name a few, Patrick Cummings, Karen Krych, John Neumeier, James Morski, Mari Lynn Brown, Yvonne Brown (teacher), Eleva Davidson (teacher), Frumeth Spiegel (teacher), Judy Conway, Naomi Sorkin, Margaret Yelacic, Elisabeth Wineberg, Carren Cheshier, Judy West, Donna Mills, Truman Finney and Paul Krumm. There are many others whom we do not hear from who are working. The marriage-reaper gets a large share of the girls. Now we have an entirely new crop of youngsters soon to be coped with in the profession.

The period between 1958 and 1968 saw some of the best Stone Camryn ballets produced. What a season we could have if they could all be rehearsed and performed in one season.

The following ballets were all performed during these ten years - "Trio Variations" (Schubert), "A Friend is Someone Who Likes You" (Delius), "Like A Weeping Willow" (Curtis) "In My Landscape" (Aborn), "Les Biches" (Poulenc), "In Whom I Live Dying" (Schumann), "L'Inconnue" (Poulenc), "Frohlicher Reigen" (Clementi), "The Lonely Ones" (Aborn), "For The Birds" (Mozart), "A Sense Of Wonder" (Schumann), "Carnival Dances" (Mozart), "Foo Foo Raw" (Strauss) and "Strange New Street" (Aborn).

Many now in the school were not here on the publication of the first bulletin. For those we will repeat Mr. Stone's article that began that issue. Most of the sentiments expressed are still those of the school today so bear repeating.

"The Upstairs Club is reached only by a hard climb of forty-eight (48) steps. It is hoped, mentally, emotionally and morally, the climb will be more severe than forty-eight stairs to reach the prospective of the club. The purpose of the Upstairs is to develop an inquisitive spirit and a creative intellect in the dance and related arts. The older generation, forming this club, had to fight and dig for their knowledge of dance, and by experience, embracing and rejecting ideas, arrived as a credo of taste with an individual judgment of their art. It is felt, as well as the young in every field, they accept too many platitudes on faith, in the name of security or group tolerance, or some such rot. The idea of individuality has been on the wane, just as the interest in ideas for pure intellectual stimulus has diminished. Yet it is always the individual in all fields, who opens the new door. The child is full of wonder, which the artist must keep with a child's spirit of inquisitiveness. The Club proposes no system, that shibboleth of the

Twentieth century would seem to be falling of its own weight. There can be no system or closed set of ideas which can work without the element of inquiry. The system closes the mind, with the insurance of easy success following given rules, which leads to conformity and takes from each person the unique characteristics which make him different from all other human beings. In a word then, Upstairs has hope for the individual, right or wrong, and none for a static point of view.

By implication, the formation of a club gathering of friends, or what have you, would seem, on the surface, to proceed like all group endeavors, i.e., to form a set of rules and make a closed society of the initiated. This, we hope to avoid by having the club an exchange platform, where the pupil of dance can realize that a walk about stage by a Shanta Rao can be fully as exciting as the Black Swan. The supplement to class knowledge to be augmented at these gatherings by lectures, movies, exhibitions, folk dancing and performance. A creative intelligence can best be developed by use of the mind. Dance or any other art, is not mere technology, it is an awareness of life to the fullest. The school as such, should not provide opinions, or a subjective objectivity or perhaps this way - perhaps that. The school must give solid knowledge, so the student may develop intelligent opinions on his own. The school of Adolph Bolm would have seemed to have done just this. Dance locally has Ruth Page, Edna McRae, Berenice Holmes, Edna Lucile Baum, Walter Camryn and many others who have continued in dance, not necessarily with the same point of view, but with an abiding interest. This would seem to me to spell success. An art has many facets, all important, therefore, a catholic interest seems the objective.

Upstairs, is not only for the protagonists of dance, but for anyone. The club should and could help struggling young artists who find it difficult meeting schedules. They may be helped by scholarships, invitations to performances they cannot afford to see, music, dance, drama, readings and exhibitions of painting. The club should dedicate itself not to the personality but to the art form in which its interest must lie whether in the Opera house or the night club.

This is written by one who would like others to see the forest, not just the trees and who for years saw only a leaf.
- Bentley Stone - 1958

A few remarks made by the noted French singer Gerald Souzay are worthy of being repeated because they apply as much to dance as to voice. We quote -

"It takes a lot of eloquence to grasp the attention of the audience so that they not only hear but listen. A singer must stir the listener's imagination so that they collaborate, (supply dancer). This can happen only when he expresses himself completely, thereby activating the slumbering artistic values of everyone.

"The distance between artist and public is enormous, and their relationship keeps changing. The contact is stronger in concert than it is in opera, except perhaps during an aria (supply ballet). In opera you usually sing to another character, even though ultimately for the audience. But it is something different entirely when you stand before a piano in a concert hall, with no orchestra between you and the audience and express yourself to your listeners as though confiding in friends.

"This rapport should be mutual. A good public expects to receive and is ready to give in return. The listeners don't know what to expect; if they knew, they wouldn't be moved and probably wouldn't come at all. Then art would not be the mystery it is, which torments us and which we need. It is like a love affair; if you knew in advance everything that was going to happen, wouldn't the magic be lost?

"The decisive moment comes when the artist feels that everything that had been possible on that evening has been accomplished. It may last a few moments or minutes, an hour perhaps, that you are in top form. I believe it can be felt whether this point has been reached. If one succeeds in realizing oneself completely, one experiences a strange and complete unity with the public. You realize your maximum when you create your own work of art, which may not be a masterpiece in itself, but a masterpiece in comparison with the possible. It is very

rare that a masterpiece does not stir a public. If the hearers don't grasp it, there is no point in their being there.

"A very important thing in art is sincerity. I am completely open about my thoughts; I loathe posing, I have made my career with a minimum of publicity and I don't regret it. I did it for music's sake, and it gives me pleasure. Over the years we come to understand the cheapness and non-viability of anything that is not genuine and true. The thought of one's own death creates a feeling of urgency toward the essentials of life and art. One understands how sincere the great geniuses were - Bach, Schubert, Michelangelo - and how vain and empty arrogance, extravagance and snobbism are in comparison. Simplicity is the reward of sincerity. It takes many years to become like a child again. Exaggerated awareness is the weakness of many contemporary artists, both those who write and those who perform; they are too clever to be creative. The trend of the times is to plan everything - syllable by syllable, tone by tone, affect by affect. Artists who work that way always know what is going to come. This is the reason I am more uneven than most. I believe in leaving something to the inspiration of the moment."

Gerald Suzay.

June was a hectic month with the clearing up after the two concerts which in itself was no small job. Immediately following the concert was the performance in Benton Harbor of "The Medium" in which ANN ROSS and STEVE PRIMIS performed. What choreography there was was done by myself in spare moments between the concert rehearsals. On the 11th of June Channel 11 taped "Dr. Eli Duffy" and "Spring Way Back When" for a late fall showing. That was a grueling affair which put my bum ankle completely on the fritz for the rest of the summer. When I see it I sincerely hope it will be worth the effort. SHEILA REILLY and her group of assistants were off for the summer at National Music Camp. JOSEPH KAMINSKI, STEVE PRIMIS and FRUMETH SPIEGEL are her aids for this year. LARRY LONG and DOLORES LIPINSKI returned from their European trip just in time for Larry to head for his Kansas summer teaching engagement and Dolores dance for three

weeks in St. Louis in "The Merry Widow" with KENNETH JOHNSON. At the moment they are dancing together again in Milwaukee in the "Widow" and other programs. They are to do one of the Grant Park children's shows sometime this month. News too late for the last Bulletin - The Bolshoi Ballet used RICHARD WILCZYNSKI MARK TRUDEAU, JEREMY POLLOCK, DANNY GILLESPIE, PENNY JAY and KAREN CARTWRIGHT in their performance of "Ballet School" at the Opera House. ANNA DROGOSEWSKI and her mother and husband left immediately after the concert for a six month tour of Europe and incidentally most of the places they intended to go were the trouble spots. We are anxiously waiting to hear how they fare when they get to Czechoslovakia and Poland. RONALD FRASIER an SC scholarship student of nine or ten years ago was here for a short while visiting and taking a few lessons. He has been a very busy boy in European capitols and will return in September to Vienna. CHUCK SCHICK is being as mysterious as ever about his activities in Europe this summer. The LONG'S saw him at a performance in Cologne Germany. STEVE PRIMIS flew again this year to Alaska to dance several Pas de Deux's and to teach. BILL BADOLATO and KATHY PARKIN are working this summer for JOHN SHARPE in Dallas Texas in their summer musicals. This is BILL'S second year there. NANCY MC CLOUD and LAURA CHAMBERLIN both left to try their luck in New York after the concert. Shortly, before that DIANE KORF was here for a brief visit - on vacation from the Music Hall. Later this summer RANDI SCHULTZ and DONNA EHRLER will go for a couple of weeks but have no intention of staying. BUD TYGETT was home in between his winter and summer terms of his Huntsville school. He seems to be very content with his job there and it appears from the photographs he brought along that he is doing good work. The JAMES MOORE'S are expecting some time this fall. JIM only recently got out of the hospital from a long needed knee operation. He is back working for Ballet Theatre rehearsing the Robbins Ballets. While in Stuttgart Germany DOLORES and LARRY LONG were able to see the premiere of JOHN NEUMEIER'S new ballet "Separate Journeys" to a Samuel Barber Concerto. The hardest critic wrote of "his unusual musicability" and in the

last Dance Magazine there was an especially good review of it. He will be home for a visit the end of August. In New York BILL MALONEY is the understudy to one of the lead parts in Tom O'Horgan's latest attack on standard drama - "Futz". He has had a chance to do the part already and with good success. He will continue as a teacher of speech at the Berghof Studio and at Philip Burton's acting school for the summer. Here in Chicago our summer course has gone on despite strikes and riots and violent changes of weather. The riot scare of months previous did hurt the out of town enrollment but there was a nice group from MRYL LAURENCE'S and PHYLLIS DE WEESE'S schools in Cincinnati and it always is a pleasure to have these well trained students with us. And an even greater treat to have PHYLLIS with us again as assistant. PEGGY MORNER is their product and this

summer is on scholarship at the Joffrey School. At the Martha Graham summer school ELISABETH WINEBERG is sampling Modern dance. LYNN COLBURN is having another summer at Connecticut College in Modern dance and has been chosen to dance in Jose Limon's ballet 'Macabre's Dance in August during the festival. Our pupils seem to find that their Character background helps them a great deal in the modern work. Mr. Stone and I can hardly wait to be off on our vacation to Banff - Jasper - Lake Louise and on our way down from there to Montana. You Chicagoans can have the Democrats. Just at the last moment letters seem to be coming from everywhere. DEBBY KRYCH PARKS in Okinawa - LAURIE PARKER in Oakland - BRIAN PETERMAN (now married) and working his way through College - JIM MOORE - BILL MALONEY - one of these days will get around to writing to you all. Do appreciate hearing from you.